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ABSTRACT

Using metaphors drawn from news stories to chart the progression, a study documented the change of meaning of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) as reflected in the news during a 15-month period beginning July 1, 1985. More than 3,200 news stories about AIDS from four wire services were examined for metaphoric content, and 300 AIDS-related metaphors were isolated and analyzed. Results indicated that initially, AIDS in the news reflected the struggle to define an unknown fear. Results also indicated that recently, wire service stories have portrayed AIDS as a defined danger, and that currently, the press is reporting on efforts to confront the danger of AIDS. (References and graphs of data are included.) (HTH)

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ABSTRACT

CONFRONTING DANGER: AIDS IN THE NEWS

by

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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The thesis of this paper is that, initially, AIDS in the news reflected the struggle to define an unknown fear. Evidence is presented that, recently, wire service stories have imaged AIDS as a defined danger. Currently, the press is reporting on efforts to confront the danger of AIDS. Using metaphors drawn from news stories to chart the progression, this paper documents the change of meaning of AIDS reflected in the news during a fifteen-month period that began on July 1, 1985. Thus far, more than 3,200 news stories about AIDS from four wire services have been examined for their metaphoric content. Three hundred AIDS-related metaphors have been isolated and analyzed. Five generalizations summarize the nonrandom patterns that have been noted. (1) The change in metaphoric role played by AIDS points to a movement from uncertainty toward certainty. (2) Also, the diversification of AIDS's role suggests a movement toward certainty. (3) The change in function of AIDS-related metaphors documents a movement from signaling danger to confronting danger. (4) The rate of change in function may be influenced by the target of metaphors. (5) The change in types of comparison (vehicle) provides additional evidence of a movement from signaling danger to confronting danger.

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This paper represents a preliminary report drawn from a larger project designed to study how a person's image of AIDS is constructed through transactions with the media. It focuses on AIDS in the news. On July 1, 1985, we began cataloging images that occurred in news stories supplied by wire services.

Telecommunications and computer technology has helped create and manage a data base of more than 3,200 wire-service, news stories. The United Press International, Associated Press, Washington Post, and Scripps Howard News Service have been monitored since July 1, 1985, to the present time. The wire services have been accessed each Thursday via the Source Telecommunications Corporation. Stories for a preceding week have been systematically recorded to the hard disk of a computer.

This paper documents a fifteen-month period when AIDS was very much in the news. The United Press International reported that AIDS was one of the top four newsmakers in 1985, the Associated Press placed it fifth in the rankings, and the Encyclopaedia Britannica ranked it as number six on a worldwide basis. Stories about school children with AIDS, worldwide fear of AIDS, Rock Hudson, and the pentagon's decision to require antibody testing of military personnel were in abundance.

Although the volume of stories on AIDS has decreased from 730 stories per quarter to 573 per quarter since the first of the year, significant issues have continued to appear in the news. Recent stories have moved to issues epitomized by the LaRouche initiative in California: Should AIDS be defined as a communicable disease? Who should have the power to mandate antibody testing? Who should be tested? Other recent topics have focused

on research progress in understanding the disease and developing vaccines as well as treatments for AIDS.

Four fundamental propositions have guided the exploration. First, news provides information or affects uncertainty (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981) about AIDS. Within this context, "uncertainty" (Rogers, 1983) means the degree to which a number of alternatives are perceived with respect to AIDS and the relative probabilities associated with AIDS. Second, what people know about AIDS is gained chiefly through the mass media (Hughey, 1986). Third, wire services supply the bulk of the news to the mass media (Bittner, 1986) and, consequently, much of the information about AIDS.

The fourth proposition is that images are constructed through a metaphoric process (Richards, 1965) and that metaphors about AIDS serve as an index to images of AIDS. News stories are messages that may include any of the basic forms of support--illustrations, instances, statistics, testimony, explanations, and comparisons. We contend that it is the comparison, analogy, or metaphor that is instrumental in building images and affecting uncertainty.

This paper addresses the issue of variations in AIDS-related metaphors: Have AIDS-related metaphors reported in the news media exhibited any non-random variations during the time period under consideration? If so, how can these patterns be characterized and interpreted? After a review of the literature and methodology used in the study, nonrandom, metaphoric variations are pinpointed and discussed in terms of their significance.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A review of the stigma literature provides a framework for analyzing the images constructed about AIDS. The role of "insidious metaphors" in forming stigmatized images provides a natural transition to a general

review of the metaphor literature. Embedded in the literature are the theoretic reasons why we chose to use metaphor as a basic analytic unit.

The perceptions of AIDS form a "double stigma" (Hughey, 1986). There is the stigma associated with mysterious diseases (Baker, 1983; Lapham, 1985). In addition, there is the stigma attached to people associated with AIDS. The person with AIDS typically belongs to groups that are often considered "socially marginal": homosexual/bisexual males, intravenous drug users, and those who have intimate relations with these individuals (Mayer & Pizer, 1983; Siegal & Siegal, 1983). News stories about stigmatized reactions of doctors to AIDS patients suggest that even professional training offers little defense against the double stigma (Ricci, 1986).

Goffman (1963) suggests that stigma marks a person as an object of great shame. Pity or sympathy along with responsibility (you get what you deserve) and peril or threat are dimensions of stigma that lead to the global feeling of ambivalence (Jones, Farina, Hastorf, Markus, Miller, & Scott, 1984; Katz, 1981).

Jones, et al (1984), speculate that "insidious" metaphors affect public expectations about the stigmatized. "Illness-disease" and "moral-deviate" metaphors appear to be relevant in the case of AIDS. Reactions to the terminally-ill AIDS patient may follow from insidious comparisons of self with the patient. This metaphoric thinking may evoke vague fears associated with images of death and recognition of the mortality of self. The label of "moral deviate" is applied to those who are condemned for breaking some societal rule. The person at risk of contracting AIDS may be seen as a degenerate tainted with evil intentions. Jones, et al, posit that "little voices" in the back of the minds of some may nag them to insist that those at risk should simply stop their immoral behavior.

Metaphor has received extensive study for centuries by scholars seeking to describe and analyze the subject. Aristotle attributed much of the power of metaphor in giving "names to nameless things" (The Rhetoric, 1405). This definition encompasses the following issues: (1) events and experiences that an individual does not understand; (2) things for which names do not exist; (3) information which is unknown or unavailable to an individual; (4) parts of reality which an individual does not wish to confirm or acknowledge; (5) parts of reality which an individual questions; and (6) things about which an individual has difficulty speaking or for finding the right words. For the most part, Aristotle's analysis of metaphor examined its contribution to enhancing a speaker's style, in the service of persuasion. Historically scholars pursued Aristotle's stylistic analysis and examined metaphor as a linguistic form of decoration.

I. A. Richards (1965) devised a theory of metaphor that treated it as more than a figure of decoration. He conceived it as a figure that produces new information about reality. Richards' work marked a transition in the studies of metaphor which examined how metaphor operates in human thinking. Although Richards stressed the unity of the metaphor, he invented terms to describe the metaphoric components. Richards explained this process with the technical terms of "tenor and vehicle." Richards suggested that the "tenor" is "the underlying idea or principal subject which the vehicle or figure means" (p. 53). Metaphor involves a thinking action between the tenor, the subject of the metaphor, and the vehicle, the item that is suddenly and surprisingly juxtaposed with the subject.

More recently, Avery Weisman (1966) argued that easily-communicated experiences are conveyed through literal language while many of an individual's "least-readily communicated experiences" or more bewildering

experiences require metaphoric language (p. 147). Earl MacCormac (1976) similarly claimed that "ordinary language rests upon well-confirmed experiences, usually so well-confirmed that we call the descriptions provided by it literal" (p. 82). He stated that confirmation by experience determines the transition from metaphoric to literal language.

Contemporary approaches to metaphor have defined extensively its role in shaping human thinking (Hawkes, 1972; MacCormac, 1976; Ortony, 1979). George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) argue that thinking is a metaphorical process. They believe that "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (p. 3).

Metaphor has been examined for its influence on reality (Langer, 1951; Wheelwright, 1968). Kenneth Burke (1977) described metaphor as a "perspective by incongruity" and highlighted its power for the individual. Because it "changes the nature of his interests, or point of view, he will approach events with a new ideality, reclassifying them, putting things together that were in different classes, and dividing things that had been together" (p. 106). According to Burke, metaphor works because it reveals "unsuspected connectives" (p. 95).

Paul Ricoeur agrees that metaphor comprises a perspective by incongruity or dissimilarity, however, he stresses the reliance of metaphor on similarity or resemblance. As Ricoeur states "the metaphorical 'is' at once signifies both 'is not' and 'is like'" (p. 7). Ricoeur conceives of metaphor as perspective by incongruity and perspective by resemblance.

Although most studies of metaphor contribute to knowledge at a conceptual level, many have neglected to examine metaphor in its everyday context, as it is used by people. However, Catherine Sullivan (1985)

examined metaphor in its everyday context by asking people to talk about their lives. It is within this tradition that this study was undertaken to examine the pragmatic effects of metaphor.

This literature review provides the basic concepts necessary for a metaphoric analysis. Images of AIDS may vary according to the role played by AIDS in the metaphor. That is, images of AIDS may serve as subject or vehicle. Metaphors may vary according to their function; people use metaphors for a variety of reasons. The notion of "double-stigma" suggests that AIDS-related metaphors may vary according to their targets; some may address the disease itself, and others may address the people associated with the disease. The discussion of the insidious illness-disease and moral-deviate images illustrates that stigma-related metaphors may vary according to vehicle. In essence, role along with function, target, and vehicle give pattern or unity to metaphor.

PROCEDURES AND QUESTIONS

This exploratory project addresses the issue of variations in AIDS-related metaphors: Have AIDS-related metaphors reported in the news media exhibited any non-random variations over time? If so, how can these patterns be characterized and interpreted?

The 3,279 news stories from the United Press International, Associated Press, Washington Post, and Scripps Howard News Service were systematically recorded to the hard disk of a computer. The wire services were accessed via the Source Telecommunications Corporation. Duplicate stories appearing on the same day for a wire service and stories not related to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome were deleted. Stories were classified in terms of date, wire service, topic, and headline.

In order to identify media metaphors, the headline and lead paragraph were examined for each news story. In stories that referred to AIDS in the headline or first paragraph, the verbal indicator "like" was used to identify an AIDS-related metaphor. A key-word search was conducted for each news story: any time the word "like" was used, the passage was examined to determine if AIDS was being compared to some other concept.

In the technical sense, a figure signalled by the word "like" constitutes a simile. However, both metaphor and simile function to compare elements (Ortony, p. 52). Ricoeur, noting the close relationship between metaphor and simile, suggested this distinction: "simile is a metaphor developed further; the simile says 'this is like that,' whereas the metaphor says 'this is that.' Hence, to the extent that simile is a developed metaphor, all metaphor, not just proportional metaphor, is implicit comparison or simile" (p. 25). A simile makes explicit the relationship implied in the metaphor. Because the purpose of this study was to uncover explicit associations with AIDS, the word "like" was used to indicate the comparison.

If "AIDS" was not found in the headline or lead paragraph, a key-word search was conducted to locate the term in the article. If "AIDS" was used in a comparison with another concept, the passage was flagged and retained for further analysis. Two hundred and seventy-six stories containing three hundred AIDS related metaphors were isolated and classified.

The time period under consideration began on July 1, 1985 and continued through October 2, 1986. The distribution of metaphors over the five quarters was less than equal. Fifty-five metaphors (18 percent) were identified in the third quarter of 1985, and 62 (21 percent) were located in the fourth quarter. As a reflection of an overall decline in the number of wire service stories on AIDS, only 24 metaphors (8 percent) were found

in the first quarter of 1986. However, 86 metaphors (29 percent), the greatest number, were isolated in the second quarter, and 73 (24 percent) were captured in the third quarter of 1986. In this paper, the third and fourth quarters of 1985 along with the first quarter of 1986 were dubbed the "early period," and the second and third quarters of 1986 were labeled the "recent" period.

The metaphors used in this study were classified according to role, function, target, and vehicle. The coding scheme emerged from the news articles themselves. The scheme undergoes periodic review, and minor modifications have resulted in the reclassification of some stories. All coding has been done by a single member of the research team; hence, intercoder reliability estimates are unavailable at this time. However, intracoder reliability estimates for the four coding categories, based upon three separate readings taken at monthly intervals, showed the coding judgments were identical for 94 percent of the cases.

The role played by AIDS was analyzed in terms tenor and vehicle. The first category consisted of metaphors where AIDS represented the thing being defined or confronted. Two hundred and twenty-seven metaphors (76 percent) were discovered where AIDS served as the tenor. For the second category, if AIDS played the role of the known quantity, the metaphor was classified as one where AIDS served as the vehicle. For instance, in the metaphor, "We wish the problem were a virus, like AIDS," AIDS becomes the vehicle that gives "the problem" meaning. Seventy-three metaphors (24 percent) were isolated where AIDS operated as the vehicle.

The metaphors were examined in terms of function and classified into three categories. The three categories consisted of metaphors where the tenor represented the thing being defined, assessed, or coped with. The

tenor of each metaphor was examined in terms of how it functioned in relationship to the concept of danger. If the vehicle in the metaphor asserted or declared that the tenor is an unqualified danger, the metaphor was classified as a metaphor that "defines a danger." For example, in the metaphor, "AIDS is like a heart that can't pump blood," the vehicle asserts that AIDS is an unqualified danger.

If the vehicle in the metaphor asserted that the tenor is a relative danger or a danger equivalent to ones that are manageable, the metaphor was classified as a metaphor that "assesses a qualified danger." For instance, in the metaphor, "the chances of getting AIDS are like being struck by lightning," the vehicle declares that the danger is a relative one.

If the vehicle in the metaphor asserted that the tenor is a danger to be overcome or a problem to be solved, the metaphor was classified as a metaphor that "copes with a danger." For example, in the metaphor, "we need to launch an effort like the Manhattan Project to conquer AIDS," the vehicle claims that the danger of AIDS is a problem to be solved.

Ninety-six metaphors (32 percent) were classified as "defining" metaphors. Seventy-eight (26 percent) were categorized as "assessing" metaphors, and 126 (42 percent) were labeled as "coping" metaphors.

The targets of the metaphors were noted. In terms of the news stories from which the metaphors were drawn, 113 metaphors (38 percent) were classified as metaphors about the disease itself, 116 metaphors (39 percent) were about people with AIDS, and 71 metaphors (23 percent) were about those not having AIDS but at risk of contracting the disease.

Metaphors were classified in terms of vehicles. One hundred and eleven (37 percent) connected what is known about diseases to the tenor. One hundred and twenty (40 percent) related characteristics of people (their attributes collectively or individually, their deity, their organs, etc.)

to the lesser known concept. Twenty-two (7 percent) related fire and things associated with heat (bombs, explosions, war, etc.) to AIDS. Forty-seven metaphors (16 percent) used time, life, events, and things such as cars, horses, bees, and flies to make their meanings clear.

The study analyzed AIDS-related metaphors reported in the news media to determine if any non-random changes had occurred during the five quarters represented by the early and recent periods. Four questions were posed.

Q1. Has the role played by AIDS in the metaphors changed?

Q2. Have the functions of the metaphors changed?

Q3. Have the targets of the metaphors changed?

Q4. Have the vehicles of the metaphors changed?

In order to detect non-random changes, role, function, target, and vehicle were compared quarterly. Time differences were evaluated by the Chi Square statistic in order to determine significance.

FINDINGS

This section is organized around the four research questions posed in the study. Charts depicting the quarterly breakdown for salient variables are displayed. These area graphs express the proportion of metaphors per quarter. Each value for a variate is calculated using the total number of metaphors for a given quarter as the base. The results of statistical tests along with illustrative metaphors are presented and discussed.

Q1. Has the role played by AIDS in the metaphors changed?

Figure 1 indicates that the use of AIDS as a known vehicle for meaning has increased. The most dramatic changes occurred during the early period, when metaphors using AIDS to make something else known increased steadily

from 5 percent in the third quarter of 1985 to almost 40 percent in the first quarter of 1986. During the recent period, the role of vehicle has regressed to the 25 to 30 percent range. The overall movement from AIDS as the tenor to AIDS as the vehicle in metaphors was significant (Chi Square [df: 4] = 15.03, p = .005).

Insert Figure 1 About Here

Seventy-three of the 300 metaphors used a knowledge of AIDS to give meaning to a variety of other concepts. AIDS was used to give meaning to research efforts and other diseases as well as other life dangers. AIDS was used to make statements about morality and the lifestyle of people. AIDS served to underscore social and economic problems. AIDS was even used as a defensive and offensive weapon. Metaphors drawn from the early and recent periods illustrate the development of the role of AIDS as a vehicle, and Figure 2 charts the progression for the 73 metaphors. Significant shifts were noted (Chi Square [df: 16] = 31.32, p = .01).

Insert Figure 2 About Here

The use of AIDS to give meaning to other diseases has declined. The first disease metaphor that was discovered made the effects of a grain fungus known through a comparison with the AIDS virus. During the early period, it became common to compare other disease-causing agents to the AIDS virus. Some metaphors pictured these diseases as offering clues for coping with AIDS. For instance, an AIDS-like virus in cats helps in the search for a vaccine.

During the recent period, AIDS is compared less frequently with other diseases but has become a standard for research efforts in general. Researchers studying the 'falling' ozone layer said we need to have an

ozone race similar to the AIDS race.

The use of AIDS to symbolize life dangers has declined. In early metaphors, the dangers and unpredictability of life were given meaning through what is known about AIDS. Wire services carried vivid accounts that likened the survival of a nuclear holocaust to living with AIDS. A story appeared about children carrying guns in Boston. Youngsters approaching their teenage years reported that school was about the only place they felt safe from the violence of every-day life. A thirteen-year-old boy reported, "I see them (guns) all the time. Everything's deadly nowadays, like AIDS." AIDS was used as a standard by which the implausibility of life can be judged. To make the point that life is stranger than fiction, Tom Wolfe remarked in mid-November, 1985, that no fiction writer could have invented anything as implausible as AIDS.

During the recent period, AIDS was a ready-made vehicle for the understanding of the Cherybol disaster and other life dangers. The nuclear comparison that had first appeared in October got a good workout when the Cherybol disaster occurred in the Soviet Union. Four metaphors compared what is known about people with AIDS to the fate of those exposed to radiation. A journalist dubbed current times as "The Age of AIDS." But recently, the life-danger metaphor has been found less frequently.

It was not until the fourth quarter of 1985 that AIDS was used to portray social problems and economic woes; recent metaphors of this type have been rare. By October, 1985, AIDS was known well enough that a woman police-recruit could complain of discrimination by saying that she was treated like she had AIDS by those at the academy. Not only had AIDS become a known standard of danger, it was assessed as a lesser danger than a social problem. A health official in Hungary alarmed by the high suicide

rate among young people in that country exclaimed, "We wish it [suicide] were a virus, like AIDS. It would be easier to find a cause, if it were something like that." The issue of crime and punishment was addressed by a death row inmate in Georgia who was awaiting his execution for a double murder. In his final statement to the press, he said that capital punishment does little more to deter criminals from committing crime than AIDS deters gays from homosexuality. On the economic side, AIDS was known well enough that three separate insurance and ambulance companies changed their names because the word "aid" in their titles was hurting business.

By the last day of 1985, AIDS was known well enough be be used as a defensive weapon. Winnie Mandela, the wife of a black, rebel leader in South Africa shouted an AIDS-insult at police trying to arrest her. The demand that she not be touched by the police was followed by the declaration that the police might have AIDS. This item demonstrated AIDS as a public symbol known beyond the confines of the United States. The story was carried by two of the wire services.

The use of AIDS as a weapon has increased during the recent period. A rebel radio station in Central America used the name 'AIDS' Vargas to demean a loyalist colonel. In Hondurus, US soldiers were pictured as infecting women and children of that country with AIDS. A school attended by the prime minister of India was disparaged by detractors by referring to it as AIDS school. The suggestion reportedly made by the Secretary of State to give Gadhafi AIDS in a "disinformation" campaign to discredit the leader was using AIDS as a weapon in a very literal sense.

The use of AIDS to portray morality and lifestyle has increased markedly. The morality metaphor did not make its appearance until the first quarter of the new year. A religious leader made a widely quoted statement about morality and lifestyles in the United states. The leader

bemoaned the way that people dealt with the Rock Hudson episode, like there was nothing wrong with homosexuality. He proclaimed that AIDS was God's way of showing His displeasure with homosexual lifestyle. To the preacher, AIDS was not only a known danger but also an expression of Divine Will.

During the recent period, the morality/lifestyle category has received considerable attention. The responsibility dimension of the AIDS stigma was addressed directly by a young pitcher with cancer. He remarked that you might look at people with AIDS as getting just what they deserve. But when you yourself come down with a deadly disease, you see things differently. Decrying the increasing number of nuns on state welfare rolls, a writer condemned the United States as a society with the moral equivalent of AIDS. A commentary suggested that it took something like AIDS to force the Mormon Church to come to grips with the issue of homosexual Mormons. Lester Maddox said that some preachers are saying that God gave AIDS to homosexuals to show His displeasure over their lifestyle. However, Maddox contended that the drought in Georgia was God's way of showing His displeasure with everyone, not just the gays. The press reported that the Soviets are producing a play about the Cherybol disaster. The play is an allegory. AIDS, a character in the play, offers to give his brain to another in need of a brain transplant, one of the officials responsible for the meltdown. In all, these illustrative metaphors suggest that AIDS moved from a symbol in search of its own meaning to a symbol with the power to give meaning to a variety of other concepts.

Q2. Have the functions of the metaphors changed?

Figure 3 points to a significant change in the functions of the media metaphors (Chi Square [df: 8) = 73.97, $p < .0001$). There was significant movement from defining AIDS as an unqualified danger toward confronting the

danger of AIDS.

Insert Figure 3 About Here

During the early period, the majority of the metaphors defined AIDS and those associated with AIDS as unqualified dangers. The first two metaphors appeared in July, 1985. AIDS blinds and disarms the immune system; this condition is like having a heart that can't pump blood. AIDS operates like an enemy within. The virus acts like a car that runs no matter what presses the gas pedal and a Trojan Horse that hides the enemy within. Victims were compared to lepers. Several metaphors likened AIDS to the plague. An attorney referred to people with AIDS in this way: "Like killer bees, we have killer humans walking around who can spread a deadly disease to everyone else. We may even have to think of quarantine." It was reported that no hurricane has the potential economic destruction that AIDS has. Gay men were compared to criminals. A news story from China depicted homosexuality and drug abuse as symbolizing a decadent West that could only spawn a deadly disease like AIDS. AIDS causes gay men to be treated like pariahs. A conservative spokesman said promoting gay rights is like promoting prostitution and rape. Supporters of gay rights warned that gay men are treated like witches and something out of an Orwellian nightmare; to see any good coming from the AIDS crisis is like saying the holocaust was good for the Jews. It was reported that a television preacher compared gays to a thing: "Gays are spreading AIDS like flies." Opponents of the gay rights bill that passed in New York City envisioned a danger to traditional values: the legislation will make it possible for gays to challenge stories like Jack and Jill and demand that Jack and John stories be included in the school curriculum.

During the recent period, metaphors defining AIDS as an unqualified danger decreased. In two separate stories, a health official from Africa compared the AIDS epidemic in his country to natural disasters like the Mexico City earthquake and the eruption of Mount St. Helens; he described the hysteria in his country by declaring that people with AIDS are treated like lepers. In the third quarter of 1986, the danger metaphors were crafted by proponents of the LaRouche initiative in California. The referendum links AIDS with highly contagious diseases like measles and TB. In an interview, LaRouche claimed that AIDS could be contracted like airborne infectious diseases.

Assessment metaphors have increased. In assessing the relative danger of AIDS, AIDS was often compared to other diseases: "You can't catch it like a cold." AIDS was compared to VD and the flu. In addition, the risk of AIDS for the general population was estimated to be like being struck by lightning on a sunny day.

Recently, a common assessment is that AIDS should be treated like any other disease. A government official asserted that immigrants with AIDS will be treated just like people with any other communicable disease. Other metaphors asserted that workers should be treated like any worker with a terminal illness or disability. A university system decided that students with AIDS will be treated like any student with a handicap.

Metaphors depicting efforts to cope with AIDS have increased. During the early period, it was said that people should cope with the danger of AIDS by thinking of it like other viral diseases; in this way the power associated with the stigma of AIDS may be diminished. A mother coped with the death of one AIDS child and the knowledge that other family members will soon die by acting like nothing's wrong. But the Governor of Colorado felt that AIDS patients represent an economic danger to future generations.

He remarked that there are two kinds of AIDS victims: those who are dead, and those who are dying. He suggested that extraordinary medical measures for AIDS victims should not be provided for the dying. Like dead leaves from a tree furnish the humus for new life, the dying should be allowed to die so the young can take their place. It was reported that the gay community is coping with the AIDS crisis like a traditional minority group. A gay hairdresser in Brazil coped with customer's fears by purchasing an ultra-violet sterilizer; this sterilizer will be like a new kind of God.

Coping metaphors abounded during the recent period. We can expect a vaccine by 1988 if everything goes like clockwork. An AIDS vaccine would be like the Sabin polio vaccine. A new test for AIDS would work like a lock and key. The discovery of a new protein is like discovering a new mineral; now we need to look at what compounds are made from it. A drug is discovered that crosses the brain's 'iron curtain'. Coping with quack drug merchants that pander to people with AIDS and people at risk is like trying to trap gophers; when you get one hole plugged another one pops up from another hole. Trying to get a new drug or treatment approved for use by people with AIDS runs into a molasses-like review process. A person with AIDS says he is going to fight like hell for the life he has left. Unlike the discrimination associated with sex or race, AIDS discrimination is easily overcome, according to a vendor of a video tape on AIDS in the workplace. Doctors described the anguish of coping with people with AIDS; unlike diseases that strike the elderly, AIDS strikes the young and vital. It is not easy to see the young cut off in their prime.

Q3. Have the targets of the metaphors changed?

Although Figure 4 indicates that people at risk of AIDS were more often the target of media metaphors during the first quarter of 1986, no

significant quarterly shifts (Chi Square [df: 12] = 19.14, p = .09) were registered. However, there was a significant change in targets for the assessment function (Chi Square [df: 8] = 15.36, p = .05); people at risk were not assessed as a relative danger until the first quarter of 1986. Let us consider this shift in targets for the assessment function.

Insert Figure 4 About Here

While 9 metaphors assessed the disease as a relative danger and 10 metaphors assessed people with AIDS as a qualified danger, only two metaphors during the early period assessed those at risk as other than dangerous. Assessment metaphors were evenly distributed among the first two quarters of the early period for the disease and people with AIDS. The two assessment metaphors for people at risk did not appear until the first quarter of 1986. In one metaphor, a gay man assessed gays as real people in need of church like anyone else. In the other metaphor, a gay spokesperson said that the passage of the gay rights bill in New York City should be viewed like the civil rights bills of the '60s.

Recently, several metaphors have assessed the people at risk of AIDS as a relative danger. Gays were assessed as a minority fighting for their rights--like blacks and women fighting to get power. A gay spokesman said that insurance screening for AIDS is like screening out black applicants. A writer for the Washington Post countered with this comparison: insurance that discriminates against people with AIDS is no different from car insurance that discriminates against young, single drivers.

Q4. Have the vehicles of the metaphors changed?

The vehicles of AIDS-related metaphors changed significantly (Chi Square [df: 12] = 25.71, p = .01). Figure 5 reflects the decreased use of

disease-like and increased used of person-like comparisons. In addition, fire-like comparisons seem to have been replaced by other comparisons.

Insert Figure 5 About Here

During the early period, other diseases such as leprosy and the plague were used frequently to image AIDS. However, recent vehicles are more likely to connect other disease-causing agents to research into vaccines and treatments for AIDS.

During both periods, people and their attributes were used to give meaning to AIDS and those associated with AIDS. For instance, AIDS is like an enemy, a criminal, or a heart that does not work. Recent metaphors are more likely to use normal people or ordinary people as a vehicle: "Workers with AIDS should be treated like any other worker with a serious disease." A gay man described his upcoming 'coming-out'; "I just act like a person."

Some of the most interesting early metaphors used heat-related vehicles in conjunction with people associated with AIDS; these vehicles are seldom found in recent metaphors. During the early period, Brazil reported that victims are spreading AIDS like a wildfire. A gay man reported that people treat him like "I carry a bomb in my wallet." Allowing a child with AIDS in school would spread the disease through the school like a flash fire. The most widely reported metaphor in the sample occurred at a meeting of concerned parents in Swansea, Mass. Allowing a child with AIDS to attend school would be like "allowing a kid to run around with a gallon of gas and a match." This metaphor was reported in four unique stories. Competing metaphors assessed the danger to be like the chances of being struck by lightning or of your hot-water heater blowing up. A conservative spokesman said that handling the politics of

AIDS is like handling nitro glycerin. A person with AIDS was described as like a timebomb. Infrequently, recent metaphors have used the wildfire, timebomb, and lightning vehicles.

During the early period, AIDS was also compared with other concepts such as things and time; these vehicles are used with greater frequency in recent metaphors. During both periods, the virus has been compared with a car and trojan horse. During the early period, people associated with AIDS were compared with killer bees and flies. Recent metaphors have not used this type of thing comparison in conjunction with those with AIDS or those at risk. Metaphors building on concepts of time were found during both periods. For instance, people are acting like these are medieval times; AIDS is like a clock ticking.

DISCUSSION

In our investigation of the metaphors used by the wire services from July 1, 1985, through October 2, 1986, we observed changes in the role played by AIDS in metaphors as well as shifts in the function, target, and vehicle of AIDS-related metaphors. We interpret these nonrandom variations to mean that the news moved from signaling the uncertainty and danger of AIDS toward confronting the certainty and danger of AIDS.

First, we contend that the change in AIDS's metaphoric-role points to a movement from uncertainty toward certainty. AIDS changed from playing a single, metaphoric role to playing a double role. Prior to October 1, 1985, it was common to find metaphors that reduced uncertainty about AIDS but unusual to locate metaphors that used AIDS to generate information about something else. Metaphors that clarified the effects of a grain fungus and nuclear radiation through references to known effects of AIDS were crafted by members of the scientific community. By the end of 1985,

it was common to identify both types of metaphor. There was a rapid movement from AIDS as the thing to be clarified to AIDS as both a tenor and the vehicle for clarifying other concepts. Ordinary citizens, such as children and police recruits, were confident enough of public understanding of AIDS to use the term to explain other aspects of life.

However, metaphors that use AIDS as the subject continue to outnumber metaphors that use AIDS as a vehicle, at the rate of three to one. No significant variations in the rate have been detected since the end of the year. Many aspects of AIDS remain open to alternative, equally probable explanations. Consequently, the services of metaphor are required to construct and reconstruct the meaning of unresolved issues about AIDS.

Second, we interpret the diversification of AIDS's role as a vehicle to mean a movement toward greater certainty. Initially, AIDS was limited to generating information about other life dangers and other diseases. Early metaphors took this form: we know that AIDS is dangerous; this life danger or that disease is like AIDS inasmuch as it is dangerous. AIDS had the power to clarify other dangers. With time, the concept categories increased. Three additional concept categories have been added to the list: AIDS is used to teach moral lessons and explain lifestyle decisions, AIDS is used to illuminate social and economic problems, and AIDS is used as a defensive and offensive weapon. Recent metaphors are more likely to take this form: we know that AIDS has this cause or that effect; X is like AIDS inasmuch as it resembles this cause or that effect. For instance, the ozone researchers know that AIDS has received the concerted attention of the scientific community; the ozone problem is like AIDS inasmuch as the ozone problem deserves the concerted attention of the scientific community. Now AIDS has the power to verify or prove points as well as to clarify or make points about other things.

Rather than merely signaling other dangers, recent metaphors use public knowledge about AIDS to confront a variety of life situations. The researcher may use AIDS to build a case for additional funding for a line of investigation. Or a scientific journal may defend the priorities in cancer research by comparing them to priorities in AIDS research. The press may use AIDS to assess the human dimensions of the Cherybol disaster. A person may use AIDS as the reason for changing his/her lifestyle or as proof in an argument about morality. An inmate may use AIDS to teach a lesson on capital punishment and to build his case against the death penalty. Governments may use AIDS as a symbolic weapon in their confrontations with other nations. There is not only diversity in the things "metaphorized" by AIDS but also diversity in purpose: AIDS signals by clarifying, and AIDS confronts by verifying or proving points.

Third, we interpret the change in function of metaphors as evidence of a movement from signaling danger to confronting danger. Indeed, there may be a linear progression in functions that moves from defining, to assessing, and then to coping. The Pearson r of .39 ($p < .0001$) compares favorably with eta, a measure of nonlinear association (eta = .47). Although the correlation is a modest one, it underscores the non-random nature of the shift in meaning of AIDS.

The data suggest that the defining function has decreased dramatically with subsequent increases in the assessing and coping functions. There is convincing evidence that the metaphors have progressed from defining subjects as unqualified dangers to assessing/confronting the dangers posed by AIDS and other concepts. However, coping metaphors outnumbered assessing metaphors until the first quarter of 1986. Thus, initially, the function that received the greatest metaphoric attention was defining,

followed by coping, followed by assessing. Perhaps, the assessing and coping functions operate like the stages in the reflective thinking process (Dewey, 1933). The reflective thinking model postulates a general movement from problem definition to problem resolution. However, intervening steps in the model are hypothesized to interact with each other in an alternating, dynamic fashion rather than a strictly linear way.

Fourth, the rate of change from signaling to confronting danger may be influenced by the target of the metaphor. There appeared to be a lag in the assessment of one of the targets of media metaphors. While AIDS, the disease, and people with AIDS were assessed as qualified dangers prior to the end of the year, the danger posed by gay men and others at risk was not debated and assessed until later.

The differential rate of assessment may be interpreted in the light of the double stigma associated with AIDS (Hughey, 1986); that is, the stigma associated with a mysterious disease that is almost always fatal, and the stigma associated with gay men and others who typically contract the disease. Research findings about the disease and people with AIDS (which include children as well as gay men) tended to demystify the disease. These findings were available for use in metaphors. People could say, "You can't catch it like a cold," and continue to develop the point with medical evidence. But research evidence could not speak directly to the "moral deviant" stigma, often attached to gay men, drug abusers, and prostitutes.

Although gay spokespersons had been laying the groundwork for assessing the gay community, explicit metaphors assessing people at risk as a relative danger did not appear until well into 1986. The passage of the gay rights bill in New York prompted gay leaders to point out that the legislation was like the civil rights legislation of the sixties. Perhaps, it took a positive event, like a legislative victory, to assess gay men as

other than dangerous. Other metaphors followed that assessed gays as real people or just like anyone else. Civil rights and minority comparisons had been used before, but they were used in a context that indicated that gay men were being treated as dangerous people like, for instance, the Germans treated the Jews during World War II.

Fifth, we interpret the change in vehicle of metaphors as additional evidence of a movement from signaling danger to confronting danger. Recent metaphors are less likely to make disease-like comparisons, especially comparisons involving leprosy and the plague. The comparisons that are made are likely to take this form: "AIDS is like any other disease." Recent metaphors are more likely to make person-like comparisons, with "like anyone else" used frequently. These changes suggest a movement toward normalizing AIDS and investing AIDS with manageable qualities that can be confronted.

In addition, fire-like comparisons have diminished; time-like and thing-like comparisons have taken their place. Fire is not only dangerous and quick but also difficult to contain. Time may be quick or slow but is predictable. Things like Trojan Horses, cars, bees, and flies can cause problems for people, but they can be controlled. The movement from wildfire, explosion, and bomb metaphors to time and thing metaphors suggests a movement toward predictability and controllablity. Perhaps, fire and timebombs are useful in drawing attention to a crisis; perhaps, time is useful in living with a crisis.

CONCLUSIONS

The nonrandom patterns associated with AIDS-related metaphors suggest something about a fifteen-month period when AIDS was in the news. However, it must be remembered that this analysis was based on three hundred

metaphors and a developing methodology.

From July 1, 1986, through March 31, 1986, metaphors in the press served to signal the danger of AIDS. Through the process of definition, AIDS emerged as a symbol with the power to give meaning to other dangers. This movement from the uncertainty of AIDS to the certitude of AIDS followed a pattern where the disease itself, people with AIDS, and those at risk became the targets of the media metaphors and were imaged as dangerous. As a symbol in search of its own meaning, AIDS was compared to other diseases, people, fire, things, and time. As a defined symbol, AIDS first became a vehicle used to picture other dangers associated with disease and life. Later, AIDS was used to make points about research, morality, as well as social and economic problems. AIDS was even used as a defensive weapon.

From April 1, 1986, through October 2, 1986, metaphors in the news served to confront the danger of AIDS. Through the process of assessing and coping with AIDS, those crafting metaphors used the certainty of AIDS not only to make points but also to prove and verify points about a variety of issues. Also, AIDS was used as an offensive weapon. There was a sharp decline in metaphors that defined AIDS as an unqualified danger and increase in metaphors that assessed and coped with AIDS. AIDS was compared to other diseases and fire less frequently and people, things, and time more frequently.

However, the process of assessing the danger of AIDS followed a diverging course where the disease itself and people with AIDS followed one path and those at risk of the disease followed another. Metaphors assessed the danger of the disease and people with AIDS as a qualified danger eight months before metaphors assessed those at risk as a qualified danger.

This preliminary report has presented illustrative metaphors that evoke a large number of specific images and a coding system that generates many cells. However, we believe that the images of AIDS in the news can be cataloged under four fundamental headings. Some metaphors image AIDS as a disease, and others picture AIDS as people. Frequently, metaphors evoke danger; frequently, they construe a challenge. Whether or not this two-by-two system will hold up in subsequent phases of our investigation remains to be seen.

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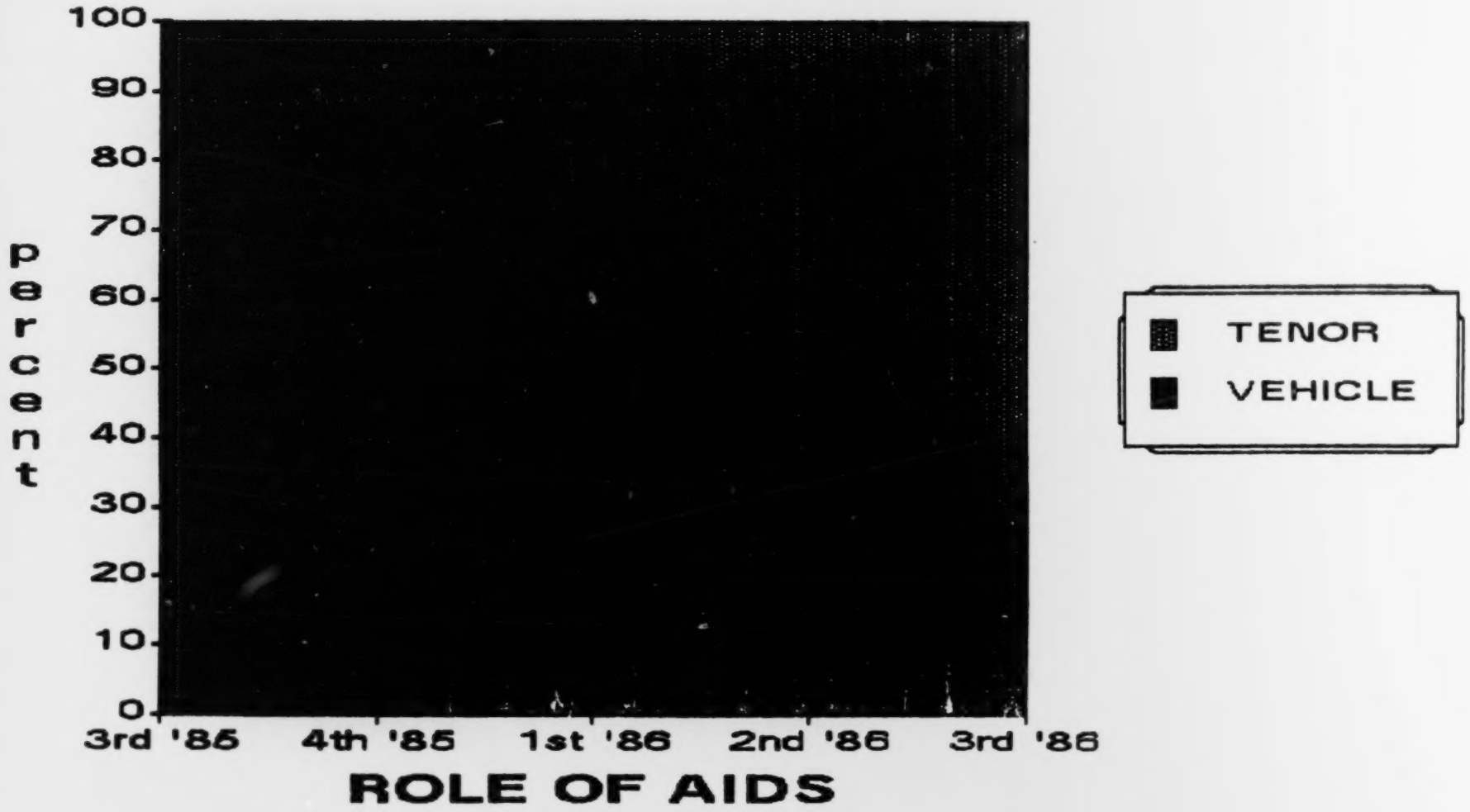

Figure 1. Quarterly breakdown for the role played by AIDS in 300 metaphors.

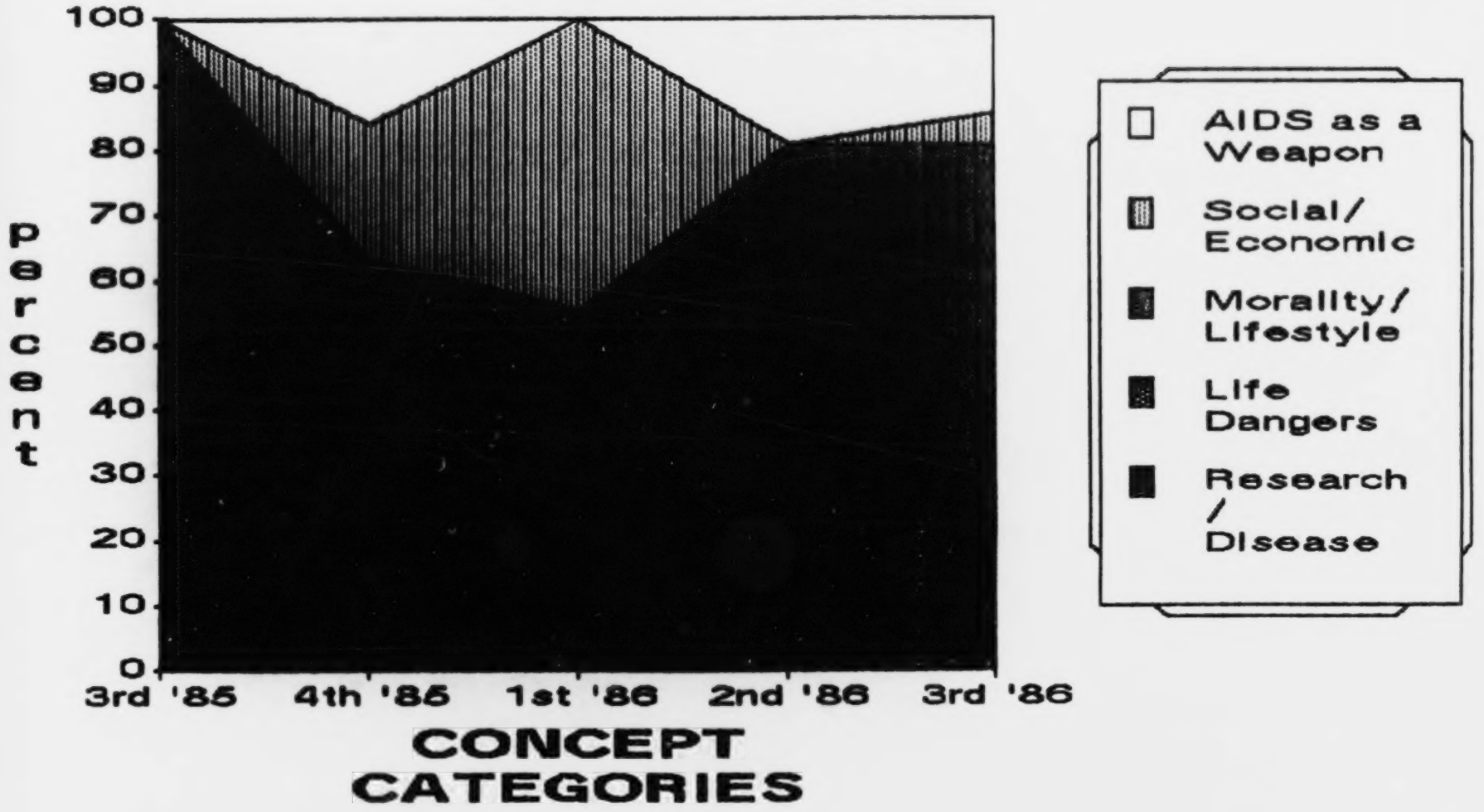

Figure 2. Quarterly breakdown for the concept categories clarified by AIDS in 73 metaphors.

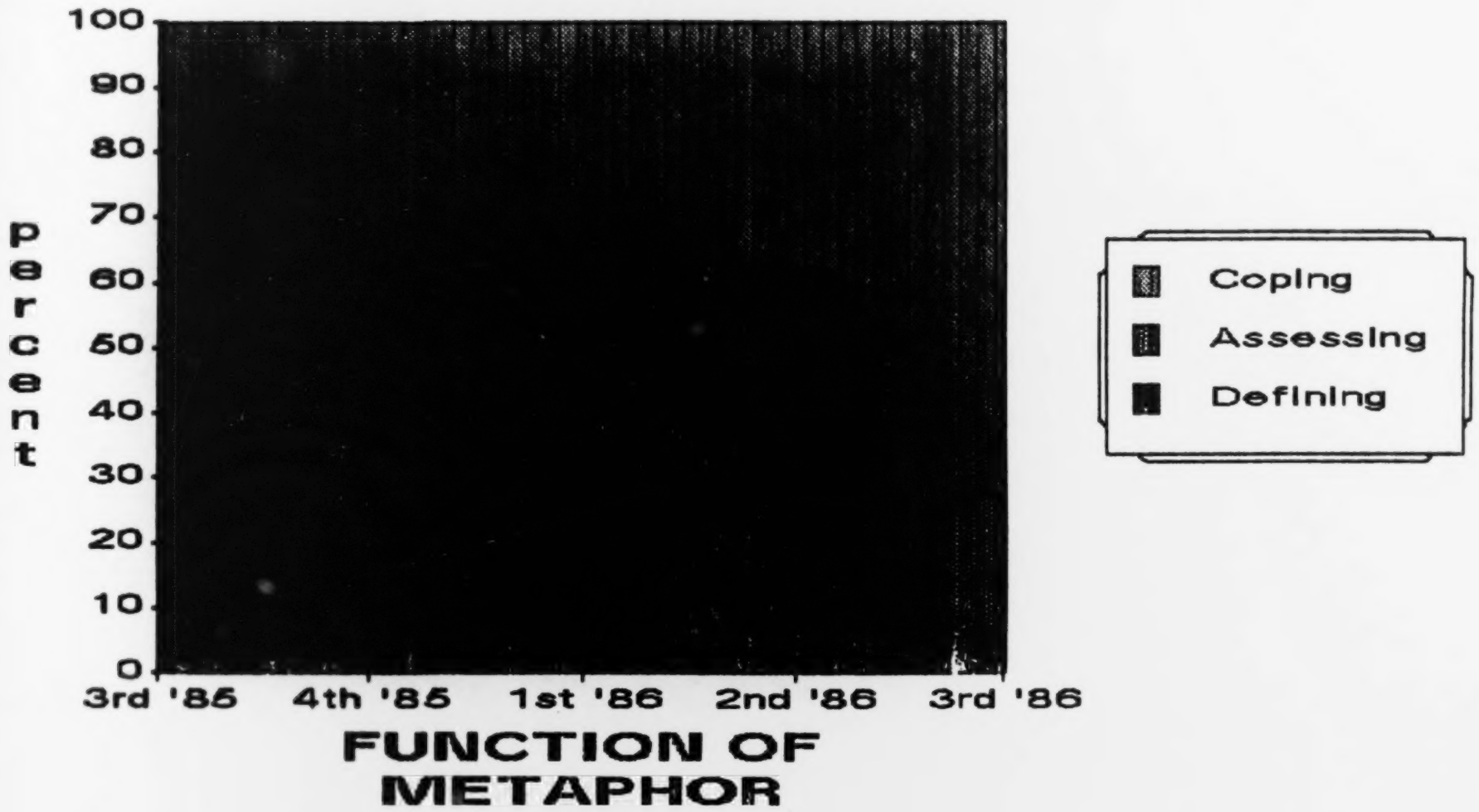

Figure 3. Quarterly breakdown for the function of 300 AIDS-related metaphors.

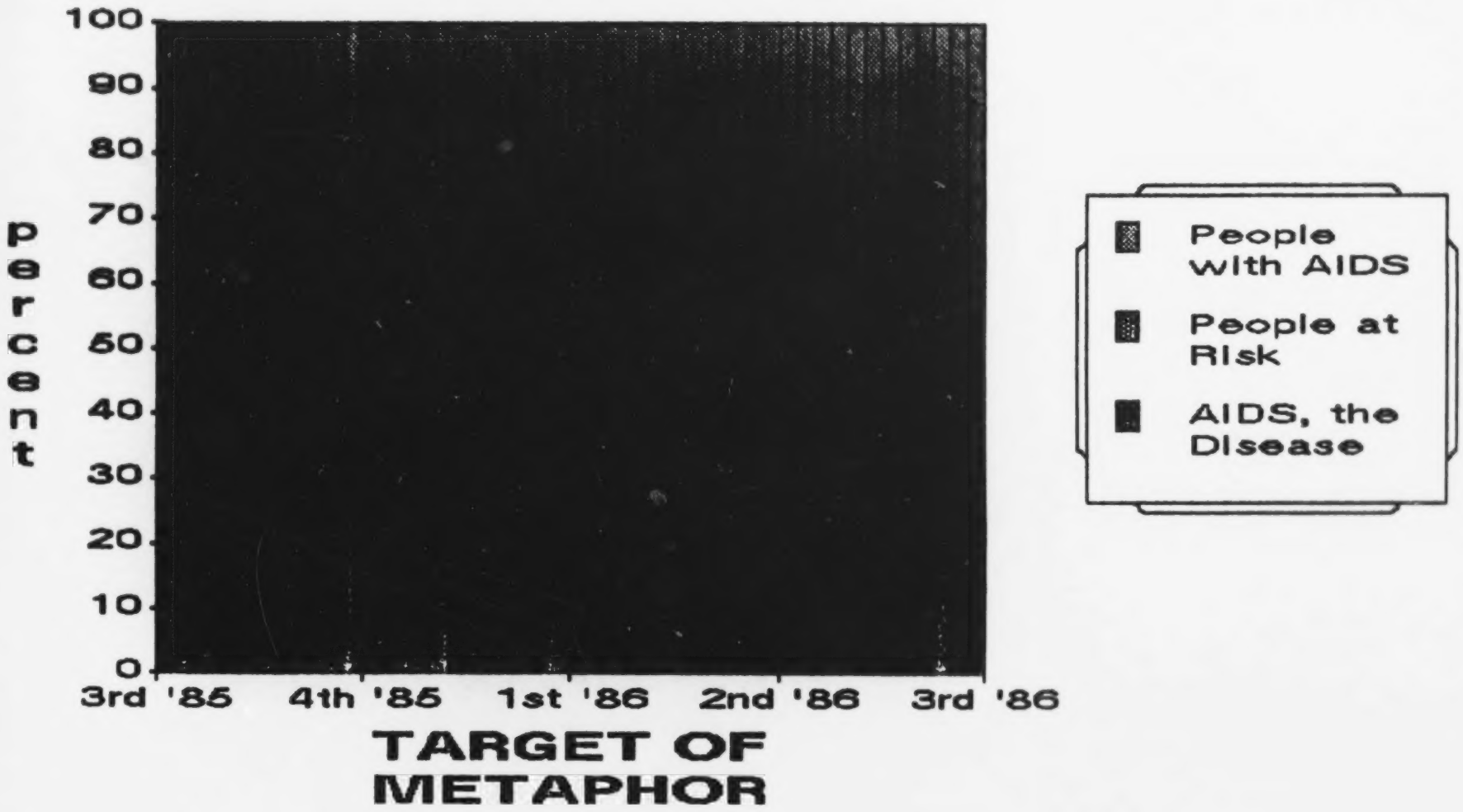

Figure 4. Quarterly breakdown for the target of 300 AIDS-related metaphors.

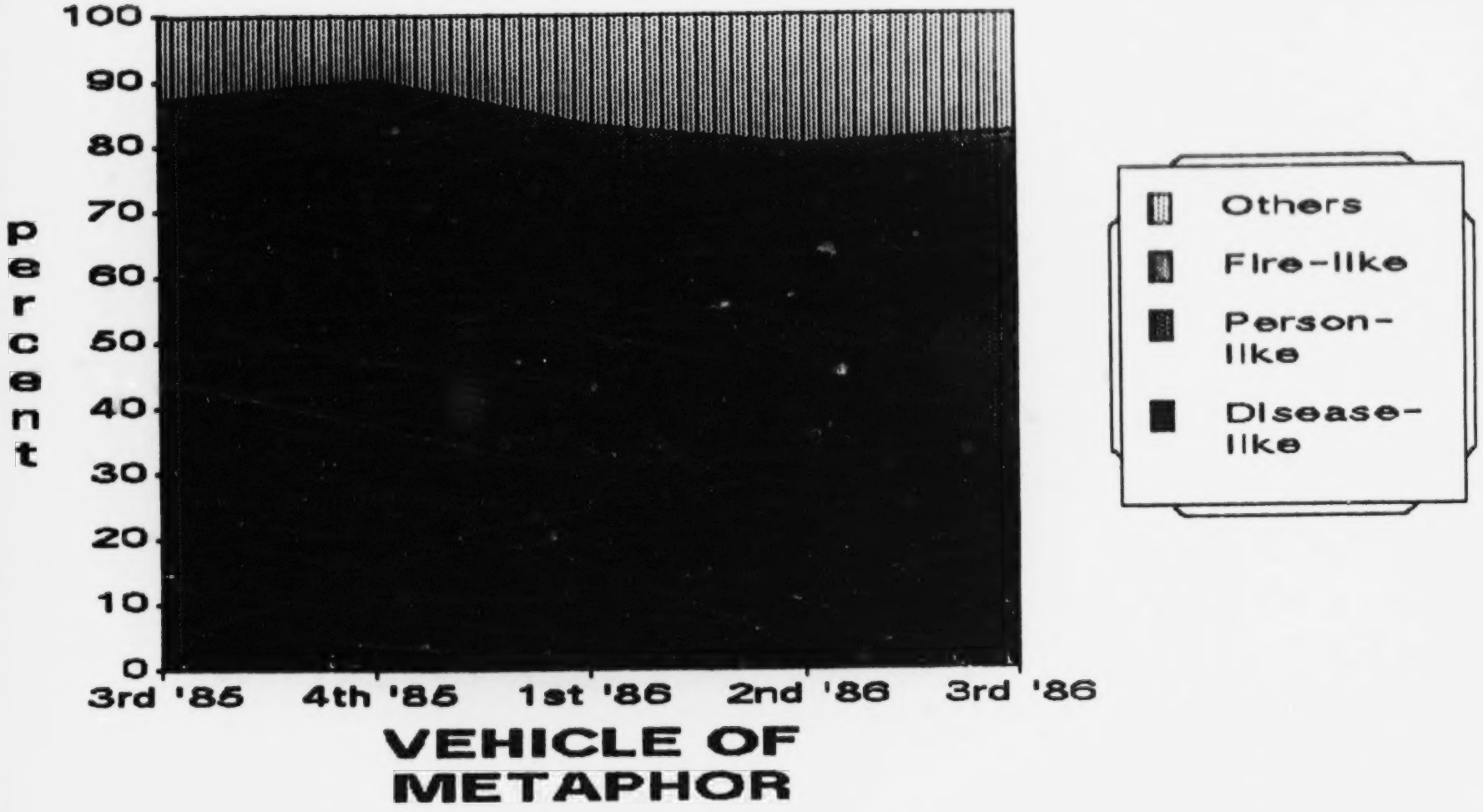

Figure 5. Quarterly breakdown for the vehicle of 300 AIDS-related metaphors.